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March 16, 2022

The Honorable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

I applaud the news that most travelers entering Canada will not need to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test as of April 1st. However, I write to assert the need to consider the elimination of current vaccination requirements at land ports of entry, which inhibit cross-border travel, the flow of commerce, and create an unnecessary barrier to the eventual resumption of pre-pandemic levels of cross-border activity.

On August 9th, 2021, Canada welcomed back Americans to cross at land ports of entry after over a year of separation from loved ones, properties, and businesses. Since that day, travel restrictions have continued to shift in accordance to guidance from public health officials. Once again, it is time to relax restrictions to adhere to current COVID-19 metrics and scientific guidelines. As of today, over 81% of Canada's population and 65% of Americans are fully vaccinated. Community spread and hospitalizations continue to decrease. As of March 1, 2022, the Ontario Ministry of Health lifted capacity limits for indoor settings and proof of vaccination requirements. In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued guidance based on COVID hospitalization and infection rates, it is safe for Americans in most communities to go without wearing a mask if they choose to do so.

I echo your remarks today, when you said that Canada will continue to look at easing measures at the borders, and specifically:

“As measures are eased and adjusted across the country, Canadians will of course benefit from that. But also, I know, continue to keep in mind the choices needed from context to context to keep themselves and their loved ones safe...And individual choices and autonomy, informed by science, informed by public health recommendations is I think something that we all agree on.”

Based on current trends, I believe it is time to follow the science and remove the remaining restrictions at the U.S. and Canadian borders to allow Americans and Canadians to move freely across.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this most important issue, and for your continued partnership. A robust binational relationship between your country and the region I represent in western New York state is critical to my community's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Higgins" with a stylized flourish at the end.

BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress

Cc: Ambassador of Canada to the United States, Kirsten Hillman
Minister of Health, Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Public Safety, Marco Mendicino